

Defence of the Reformers' Action.

words they would go the length of renouncing their allegiance for the sake of their religion, if Elizabeth would stand by them. This was at least a feasible policy, but Elizabeth would not at this stage commit herself to revolutionary projects against constituted authority, and Cecil was too wary a tactician to unequivocally pledge English support in the meantime. Pending the development of events, they confined themselves to pecuniary assistance.

On the other hand, it is certain that Knox and his associates, in thus decidedly embarking on a treasonable course, had good grounds for their suspicions of the regent's policy. They could not have known of the secret treaties ; they were ignorant of the urgent appeals from the regent to the pope and her daughter, now Queen of France, for help to maintain the Church and the French alliance and suppress heresy. But they could not mistake the meaning of the arrival of successive detachments of French troops and the fortification of Leith, where they were stationed. The effect of this revelation is of capital importance in the drama which followed. As in the Netherlands, the presence of these foreign troops played into the hands of the reformers, even if for a time it exposed their cause to great jeopardy. The landing at Leith of detachment after detachment of French soldiers with their wives and children looked like a set attempt to subjugate the country to France, and, in spite of a plausible proclamation by the regent on the subject, it greatly strengthened the reformers' hands. Even in this diplomatic manifesto Mary of Guise could not conceal her animus against men like Knox who presumed to question or impugn the action of their rulers. " Bot of one thing we gif you wairning that quharas sum preachearis of the Congregatioun, in thair publict ser-monis, speikes irreverentlie and sklanderouslie, alsweill of Princeis in general!, as of ourself in particulare, and of the obedience to the hiear poweris, inducing the pepill, by that pairt of their doctrine, to defectoun from thair dewatie, quhilk pertenis na thing to religioun: thairfoir we desyre yow to tak ourdour in youre toun and boundis, that quhan the Preachearis repairis thair, they use thame selfis mair modestlie in thay behalfis, and in thair preacheing not to mell [meddle] sa mekle [much] with civill policie and publict governance, nor